

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of)	
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LUKAS ZEHNDER, et al.)	Group Art Unit: Unassigned
)	
Application No.: Unassigned)	Examiner: Unassigned
)	
Filed: November 13, 2001)	
)	
For: CONTACT ZONE FOR A POWER)	
BREAKER)	

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination of the above-captioned patent application, applicants request that the following claim amendments be entered. Additional amendments are incorporated in the formatted Substitute Specification submitted herewith. A copy of the original application, together with a CompareRite® version showing the amendments made to the original application, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121 (2001), are also submitted herewith. No new matter has been introduced in these amendments to the original specification.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace Claims 1-6 as follows.

1. (Amended) A contact zone of a quenching chamber which is arranged rotationally symmetrically about a central axis and is filled with an insulating medium,

having at least two stationary consumable contacts which are in the form of contact rings and which, when the quenching chamber is closed, are electrically conductively connected by means of a bridging contact which is arranged centrally and can move axially and having electrically insulating covers, which at least partially cover mutually facing end surfaces,

wherein a wedge-shaped annular gap, which is open in the radial direction and originates from a contact-making edge of the cover, is provided between a contact-making surface and an insulating cover and

wherein the edge is dielectrically shielded by means of an annular bead which projects beyond the contact-making surface.

2. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 1,

wherein the edge is arranged in the immediate vicinity of the annular bead.

3. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 1,

wherein the cover has a rectangular cross section in the region where it covers the contact-making surface and

wherein an elastic projection is integrally formed as a rim, which extends in the axial direction, externally on this rectangular cross section.

4. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 3,

wherein the rim is provided with means which allow the cover to be connected mechanically to the contact ring, and

wherein the mechanical connection is made such that the edge is always pressed in a sprung manner against the contact-making surface.

5. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 4,
wherein the mechanical connection is designed to be detachable.

6. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 5,
wherein a snap-action apparatus or a screw connection is provided as the mechanical connection.

REMARKS

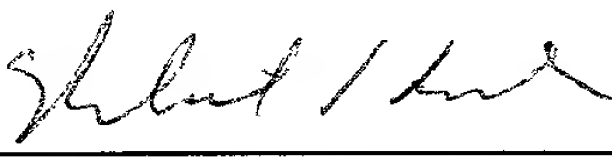
By way of the foregoing amendments to the claims, Claims 1-6 have been amended to delete the multiple dependencies and to replace the words "characterized in that" with the word "wherein". These changes have been made in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121 as amended on November 7, 2000. Marked-up versions of Claims 1-6 indicating the changes accompany this Preliminary Amendment.

Early and favorable consideration with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: November 13, 2001

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated November 13, 2001

Marked-up Claims 1-6

1. (Amended) A contact zone [(1)] of a quenching chamber which is arranged rotationally symmetrically about a central axis [(2)] and is filled with an insulating medium, having at least two stationary consumable contacts which are in the form of contact rings [(4, 15)] and which, when the quenching chamber is closed, are electrically conductively connected by means of a bridging contact which is arranged centrally and can move axially and having electrically insulating covers [(11, 22)], which at least partially cover mutually facing end surfaces, [characterized

- in that] wherein a wedge-shaped annular gap, [(11a, 22a)] which is open in the radial direction and originates from a contact-making edge [(10, 21)] of the cover [(11, 22)], is provided between a contact-making surface [(7, 18)] and an insulating cover [(11, 22)] and

[- in that] wherein the edge [(10, 21)] is dielectrically shielded by means of an annular bead [(8, 19)] which projects beyond the contact-making surface [(7, 18)].

2. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 1, [characterized

- in that] wherein the edge [(10, 21)] is arranged in the immediate vicinity of the annular bead [(8, 19)].

3. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in [one of claims 1 or 2] claim 1, [characterized

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Marked-up Claims 1-6

- in that] wherein the cover [(11, 22)] has a rectangular cross section in the region where it covers the contact-making surface [(7, 18)] and

[- in that] wherein an elastic projection [(12, 23)] is integrally formed as a rim, which extends in the axial direction, externally on this rectangular cross section.

4. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 3, [characterized
- in that] wherein the rim is provided with means which allow the cover [(11, 22)] to be connected mechanically to the contact ring [(4, 15)], and

[- in that] wherein the mechanical connection is made such that the edge [(10, 21)] is always pressed in a sprung manner against the contact-making surface [(7, 18)].

5. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 4, [characterized
- in that] wherein the mechanical connection is designed to be detachable.

6. (Amended) The contact zone as claimed in claim 5, [characterized
- in that] wherein a snap-action apparatus or a screw connection is provided as the mechanical connection.